

## **5440-81 Intensive Special Education Teacher**

*The holder is authorized to provide comprehensive special education services to individuals age 3 through 21 with intensive special needs, as defined in federal regulations pertaining to special education eligibility. The holder is authorized to provide or oversee the provision of instructional services and to collaborate with an interdisciplinary team to design, implement, and evaluate educational plans and accommodations for individuals with intensive special needs.*

In order to qualify for this endorsement, the candidate shall demonstrate the following:

### Knowledge Standards:

**Demonstrates knowledge of human development including the implications of a variety of delays, disorders, and disabling conditions for learning and development; appropriate procedures and strategies for identifying and supporting the learning and development of individuals with severe and multiple disabilities; and procedural, consultation, collaboration, and case management knowledge and skills essential to implementation of an effective educational support program, as delineated in current national professional standards.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the educator understands:**

#### *Foundations:*

Typical and atypical development at the early childhood through adult level within each domain, including the wide variation in how individuals learn and typically develop, and the variety of economic, social, and cultural influences that affect each student's life

The interaction of primary language, culture, and familial background with an individual's special educational needs

The key roles of the special educator as teacher, advocate, consultant, facilitator, and collaborator within the educational support system

The philosophical, ethical, historical, and legal foundations of special education, including the evolution of key litigation, legislation, and regulations affecting special education

Current models and theories that form the basis of special education practice

Current state and federal laws, regulations, and procedures governing referral; identification/evaluation; eligibility determination; Individual Education Plan (IEP) development, implementation, and monitoring; and placement of students with severe and multiple disabilities

Professional and ethical standards of practice

#### *Program Development, Consultation, and Collaboration:*

The design and delivery of effective training programs to educational staff and parents

Characteristics, processes, and roles associated with effective collaboration, teaming, consultation, facilitation, and communication within school, family, and community systems

Family systems theory and principles of family-centered practice, including how to work cooperatively and respectfully with all families to support children's learning and development

## **5440-81 Intensive Special Education Teacher (Cont.)**

Strategies for effective group facilitation, leadership, and conflict resolution

Local, state, and community resources, service delivery systems, and systems of care available to support students and their families

Guidelines for making related service decisions and different roles of related service providers (e.g., OTs, PTs, SLPs) required to support students with severe and multiple disabilities

Roles and responsibilities of paraeducators and their supervision

### *Assessment:*

The comprehensive evaluation process, including legal aspects, appropriate procedures, and principles of non-discriminatory evaluation

Selection, administration, and interpretation of data from various forms of assessment, and interpretation of reports from specialized service providers, including medical evaluators

Measurement theory and practice, including issues of validity, reliability, norming, and bias

How to enable the participation of students with severe and multiple disabilities in all local and statewide assessments through accommodation and/or alternative assessment methods

### *Severe and Multiple Disabilities, Specialized Instruction, and Interventions:*

Characteristics of the severe and multiple disabilities stipulated in state law, and impacts of these severe and multiple disabilities on an individual's educational performance, including knowledge of medical and health-related conditions

A wide variety of community-referenced, research-based specialized curricula, instructional practices, and curriculum-based assessments, adaptations, and accommodations and supports to enable students with severe and multiple disabilities to function in integrated community environments and to progress in the general education curriculum

Research-based practices in functional curricular design and instruction, multi-level instruction, authentic teaching, curriculum overlapping, and differentiated instruction

Transition-planning and community-based education issues as they pertain to the needs of students with severe and multiple disabilities

Strategies for proactive and non-aversive behavior management

### *Foundations of Basic Skill Areas:*

*Development of Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication, Language, and Literacy* – Processes, principles, and dimensions of communication and language acquisition; elements of effective, age-appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication; the impact of severe and multiple disabilities and emotional and cultural factors on communication, language development, and the acquisition of reading and writing; role of metacognition in communication, language, and literacy development; the purposes of language; the phonemic, morphemic, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic systems of language and their relationship to the reading and writing process.

## **5440-81 Intensive Special Education Teacher (Cont.)**

*Reading* – Reading as the process of constructing meaning from symbols (e.g., text, photographs, line drawings, alphabet, tangible symbols and gestures)

*Numeracy* – The continuum of development of mathematical thinking, particularly in the areas of mathematical quantification, calculation, and reasoning and their application to the life skills as they relate to severe and multiple disabilities

*Behavior* – Typical and atypical social/emotional, psychological, and cognitive development as they relate to severe and multiple disabilities

*Life Skills* – Typical and atypical communicative, cognitive, sensory, and motor skill development as they relate to the development of personal care, socialization, vocational, recreation and leisure, community participation and domestic skills

*Sensory and Motor Skills* – Typical and atypical sensory and motor development; functioning issues associated with various common disabling conditions; relationship of sensory and motor functioning to learning, classroom behaviors, and demonstration of competence in academic and non-academic tasks

### Performance Standards

**Working in collaboration with teachers, parents/caregivers, the student, and other professional and paraprofessional personnel, the Intensive Special Education Teacher determines eligibility for special education services; develops, implements, case manages, and evaluates individual educational programs for students with severe and multiple disabilities; identifies and implements accommodations of learning materials or environments in order to support inclusion; and provides direct instructional services, in order to enable students with severe and multiple disabilities to meet Vermont's learning expectations for students. In addition, the Intensive Special Education Teacher provides professional and technical assistance to the Special Educator or Consulting Teacher. Specifically, the Intensive Special Education Teacher:**

#### *Foundations:*

Advocates for the particular needs of students with IEPs and for an effective, comprehensive system of support services for all students

Adheres to ethical and professional standards, and state and federal regulatory requirements pertaining to the education of students identified as having severe and multiple disabilities

#### *Program Development, Consultation, and Collaboration:*

Demonstrates collaborative and consultative skills in a variety of settings, including IEP planning and development, implementation of the comprehensive evaluation process, and communication with appropriate personnel regarding planning and delivery of instruction and accommodations

Works cooperatively and respectfully with all families to support and enhance student's learning and development, including using collaboration skills to foster respectful and beneficial relationships with parents and to encourage their participation in decision making and planning within EPTs

Uses a variety of data and resources to develop and evaluate IEPs in a collaborative context that includes the student, his or her family, and other professional colleagues and personnel from other agencies, as appropriate

**5440-81 Intensive Special Education Teacher (Cont.)**

Obtains multiple perspectives on the strengths and needs of students with severe and multiple disabilities, and defines authentic, observable, measurable, and sequenced short- and long-term objectives and benchmarks in IEPs

Case manages individual student programs and facilitates coordinated services for students with special learning needs and their families, including using collaboration skills to work with professionals and personnel from other agencies, as appropriate, to jointly plan services for children and youth with severe and multiple disabilities and their families

Supports classroom teachers in accommodating students with severe and multiple disabilities within the regular classroom by identifying, developing, or modifying instructional materials, curricula, or aspects of the classroom environment, and by modeling instructional methods and/or classroom management techniques

Demonstrates effective team teaching skills with teachers in general classroom settings

Provides systematic training for special educators and other school personnel in specialized instructional techniques and methodologies

*Assessment:*

Facilitates the comprehensive evaluation process, including adhering to appropriate state and federal guidelines and evaluation procedures

Applies appropriate screening and assessment measures in order to identify learning difficulties and strengths, establish eligibility for special education services, and design effective individualized instruction

Interprets reports from specialized service providers

Incorporates the results of eligibility assessments into written evaluation reports that communicate the array of information gathered in a technically correct format that is understandable to all who must be able to use the reports

*Specialized Instruction and Interventions:*

Supports students to access and benefit from the general education curriculum and integrated community environments through specialized instruction and related services

Based on assessment data, selects and implements interventions and accommodations appropriate to individual student needs

Integrates the various specialized therapeutic services into ongoing curriculum and classroom practice

Educates students with severe and multiple disabilities within a framework which focuses on students' strengths, styles, interests, and student and family values and goals

Monitors and assesses the efficacy of instruction based on on-going observation and data collection, makes adjustments to the students' learning plans based on these assessments, and provides support and feedback to classroom teachers to adjust their practice

**5440-81 Intensive Special Education Teacher (Cont.)**

Creates and/or modifies school or community learning environments and interactions in order to promote communication, self-directed learning, self-confidence, socialization, life skills, and academic achievement of students with severe and multiple disabilities

Develops and implements systemic and proactive procedures that address problem behavior at the building, classroom, and individual student levels

Uses strategies to promote maintenance and generalization of students' knowledge and skills across settings

Designs and implements friendship and advocacy support systems in the regular classroom for students with severe and multiple disabilities, including facilitating partner and peer learning and other cooperative processes

Additional Requirements:

Completion of a baccalaureate level teacher preparation program in the education of students with severe and multiple disabilities, or a minimum of 24 credits in the education of students with severe and multiple disabilities.

A minimum of a practicum, or the equivalent, in the teaching of students with severe and multiple disabilities

---

<sup>1</sup> *What Every Special Educator Must Know: Ethics, Standards, and Guidelines for Special Educators. Fifth Edition. (The Council for Exceptional Children, 2003).*